



Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie
Welcome Center Hours 8 am-4:30 pm (Mon-Sat)

Open Saturday Starting April 16

30239 South State Route 53

Wilmington, IL 60481

Phone: 815-423-637

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/midewin>

Midewin Meadowlark Messenger April 2011

Here's what the bird is bringin'

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☆ [Calendar of Volunteer Workdays and Events for April-May](#)

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Check out our new website at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/midewin>. This site is under construction, so stay tuned for continuing progress.

☆ Calendar of Volunteer Workdays/ Events for April-May

Tours/presentations

Volunteer workdays

Training workshops

Special Events

DATE	TIME	MEETING LOCATION	ACTIVITY
9 April Saturday	CANCELLED	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Public Tour: Birds at Midewin (Westside) <i>Car caravan led by interpreter, John Baxter</i>
16 April Saturday	10:00am – 12:00pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Public Tour : Cemetery visit featuring Maple Hill and Klingler cemeteries <i>Car caravan led by interpreter, Linda Konley</i>
21 April Thursday	7:00pm- 8:30pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Lecture Series: Spiders of the Prairie. <i>Presented by Wendy Tresouthick, Midewin's Environmental Education Specialist</i>
23 April Saturday	8:30am- 10:30am	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Public Tour : Birds at Midewin (Eastside) <i>Car caravan led by interpreter John Baxter</i>
23 April Saturday	9:00am – 2:30pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Earth Day - Garlic Mustard Control in native woodlands. Free lunch provided
28 April Thursday	8:00am -12:30pm	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	Invasive Plant Control – Garlic Mustard control in native woodlands
30 April Saturday	10am- Noon	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Midewin for Kids-Naturalist Badge
4 May Wednesday	6:30pm-7:30pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Bird Monitor Workshop: For new and returning monitors
7 May Saturday	9:00am- 2:30pm	River Road Seedbeds	Planting plugs at River Road seedbeds and/or removing garlic mustard
7 May Saturday	10am- Noon	Call for Meeting Location	Public Tour : Midewin by Horseback (bring your own), <i>Led by equestrians, Mike and Trish DeLucas and Greg and Donna Malanca</i>

7 May Saturday	10:00am-Noon	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Cow Watching
7 May Saturday	10am- Noon	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Butterfly Monitor Workshop: For new monitors
7 May Saturday	1:00pm-3:00pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Butterfly Workshop: For intermediate monitors
9, 10 & 11 May Monday-Wednesday	6:00am- Noon	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Bird Survey: Shrike and Sandpiper Join any or all monitoring days.
12 May Thursday	8:00am- 12:30pm	Midewin SO Horticulture Building	Wild native seed marking for later harvest
14 May Saturday	8:00am- 10:00am	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Public Tour : Birds at Midewin (Westside) <i>Car caravan led by interpreter, John Baxter</i>
14 May Saturday	10:00am- Noon	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Public Tour : Midewin Rise-and-Bike (Fat tire or hybrid tire recommended), <i>Led by interpreters Connie Heinrich and Larry Lottino</i>
14 May Saturday	10:15am- 11:45am	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Woods and Wetland Walk
14 May Saturday	2:00pm- 4:00pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Public Heritage Tour : Pre-Midewin <i>Led by interpreter Lorin Schab</i>
21 May Saturday	9am- 2:30pm	Midewin SO Horticulture Building	Planting plugs at restoration area
21 May Saturday	10:00am	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Prairie Health Walks (5k or 11K)
21 May Saturday	10am- Noon	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Butterfly Field Workshop for new and returning monitors
21 May Saturday	10:00am- 3:00pm	Midewin SO Horticulture Building	Midewin Tallgrass Prairie Alliance Plant Sale: Pickup Orders and/or Purchase
28 May Saturday	1:00pm – 3:00pm	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Public Tour : Lincoln's Boys in Blue <i>Led by interpreter Lorin Schab</i>

For more information about the events listed or to RSVP contact Allison (Hedden) Cisneros, Volunteer Coordinator at 815-423-2149 or amcisneros@fs.fed.us.

Knowing how many volunteers or visitors will attend an event allows Midewin staff to better organize the event, and we can inform you of any changes or cancellations. Workdays may be cancelled if extreme weather occurs (again, please call ahead). If you plan on staying for the entire workday, please bring your lunch. As always, Midewin will provide tools, safety gear, and water for volunteers. Children are welcome, but must be accompanied and supervised by a parent, guardian or chaperones (for educational groups). Volunteer groups are welcome to join our workdays; many hands make for light work. Please do not bring dogs or other pets to workdays.



[Click for Directions:](#)
[Supervisors Office \(SO\)](#)
[and River Road Seedbeds](#)



☆ Join us for an Earth Day Tradition

Earth Day Celebration on April 23, 2011

Please join us from 9- 2:30ish

Give a wildflower a chance to grow!

Help us control the thugs

Meet at the Welcome Center

We will travel to Midewin's woodland areas and remove garlic mustard and other such invasive species.

RSVP to Allison Cisneros to reserve your Free Lunch at 815.423.2149



Garlic Mustard, *Alliaria petiolata* is an invasive species that is taking over many woodland areas. This plant dominates the woodland floor and suppresses valuable native wildflowers within years. Garlic Mustard not only threatens native plants but all other wildlife that depends on those plants for survival. This plant produces large amounts of seed that allows the weed to spread rapidly. If that is not bad enough, it releases toxins into the soil that inhibit other plants from growing. We can slow down the Garlic Mustard invasion by eliminating individuals before they set seed.

Together we are making a Difference!

☆ Invitation to a Picnic for the Planet

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Picnic for the Planet is a celebration of the planet we live on, the food it provides and the people we share it with.

Picnic for the Planet is led by The Nature Conservancy but is open to all. Especially those six or seven billion of us who benefit from the food, water and air that the planet provides.

On Earth Day 2011 (April 22), people all around the world will be stepping outside and heading to their favorite outdoor spot to enjoy good food in the company of great people.

Signup at the website below and meet at Midewin's River Road Trailhead on Friday, April 22 at Noon with your sack lunch or picnic basket.

We also encourage you to hike the Prairie Creek Woods Loop after lunch and count how many spring wildflowers you can recognize.

<http://www.meetup.com/NatureConservancy/Wilmington-IL/>



☆ Upcoming Volunteer Workshops at Midewin....

Butterfly Monitoring:

Duties and Responsibilities: Designated areas will be assigned and monitors will be asked to choose a route through as many habitat types as possible. Monitors will record all butterfly species they recognize along their pre-planned route.

Qualifications: Experience is not necessary, but monitors must be willing to learn 25 new butterflies each year. At first, monitors may need to catch and release certain butterflies to confirm their identification. Photography for later identification is encouraged. Peak conditions for butterflies are warmer than 75° and slight to no breeze. Monitors must have flexible schedules to be available for a survey when weather conditions are ideal. Surveys must take place between 10am and 3:30pm. Monitors are responsible for their own transportation. This type of work is often easier and safer with a partner, so this should be highly considered.

Time Commitment: Monitors gain more experience every year and therefore data gets more thorough and accurate, so a multiple year commitment is preferred but not required. Monitors are asked to survey their assigned area, over the same route, 6 times during butterfly season (June 1– August 7). Four of these six surveys must take place before July 20. Monitors should spend 1-2 hours each visit in order to thoroughly cover their area.

Training: All monitors are required to complete Midewin's in-house orientation (dates below) and field training that will cover safety, protocols, and available training materials. New monitors may choose to partner with a more experienced monitor until they are comfortable taking on an area of their own. Butterfly nets are provided and close range binoculars are available for checkout. Field guides must be purchased.

RSVP to Allison Cisneros at 815.423.2149. All workshops meet at the Welcome Center



Beginner Butterfly Training: Saturday, May 7 from 10-Noon.



Intermediate Butterfly Training: Saturday, May 7 from 1-3pm.



Butterfly Field Session: Saturday, May 21 from 10-Noon.

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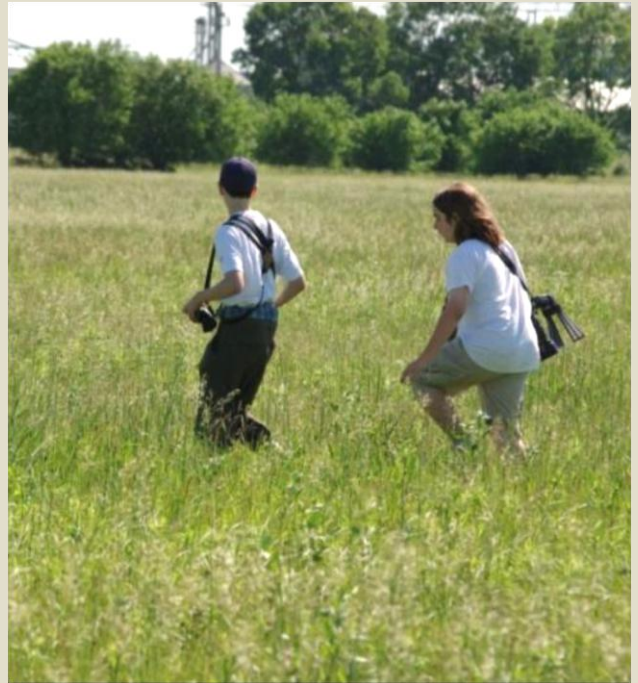
Bird Monitoring (for new and returning monitors):

Duties and Responsibilities: Designated areas will be assigned and monitors will record all bird species they recognize by sight or song. Monitors must do their best to cover the entire assigned area, which could be up to 300 acres.

Qualifications: Monitors must have some experience with bird identification and provide their own binoculars. Being able to identify birds by song isn't necessary, but is helpful. Over time you'll get to know the birds by both sight and sound. Birds are most active during morning hours, so monitors should be available in between sunrise and 10am. Monitors are responsible for their own transportation. This type of work is often easier and safer with a partner, so this should be highly considered.

Time Commitment: Monitors gain more experience every year and therefore data gets more thorough and accurate, so a multiple year commitment is preferred but not required. Monitors are asked to survey their assigned area 3-5 times over the breeding season (mid-May to mid-July). These surveys should be spread over the full season. Monitors seem to spend 1-3 hours each visit in order to thoroughly cover their area.

Training: All monitors are required to complete the in-house orientation that will cover safety, protocols, and available training materials. This program was designed to accommodate a 'learn as you go' approach, so beginners are certainly welcome.



RSVP to Allison Cisneros at 815.423.2149. Workshop meets at the Welcome Center

Bird Training: Wednesday, May 4 from 6:30pm-7:30pm.

You can start studying now at these websites:

<http://www.birdjam.com/learn.php>, recorded by Lang Elliott, the primary bird song recorder for the Eastern Stokes Guide

<http://www.naturesongs.com/birds.html> North American Bird Sounds

<http://sirismm.si.edu/testper/nasongkey.pl> Guide to North American Bird Songs and Sounds



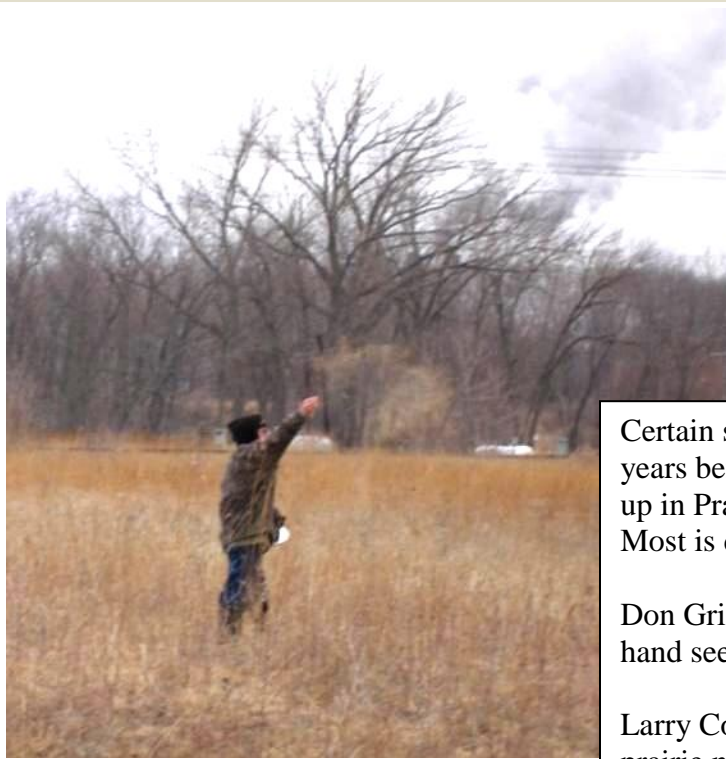
☆ Reminiscing with the Volunteer Staff Off to a great start in 2011!



John Field (left) and Kirk Frazier, among other volunteer staff have learned how to control a variety of different machines to break down seed heads to collect the raw seed. Small quantities or delicate seeds we clean by hand though.



Jack McNamara checks a sample for the viability of the seeds he has been cleaning. Midewin can produce about 30-60% of its own seed year to year, so we better make sure the seeds are healthy.



Certain seeds get planted in plug trays and grow for a couple years before making it to a restoration. But some get mixed up in Prairie recipes and broadcasted right away. Most is done with ATVs, but some by hand.

Don Grisham (left) makes the best of a very windy day to hand seed at Drummond Dolomite Prairie.



Larry Costain (above in red) fills his bucket with a wetland prairie mix for the Middle Grant Creek restoration.



(L to R) John Field, Christine Riley, Heather Albekier, Len LeClaire and Larry Costain among others helped flag some good locations and planted 29 rare Hill's thistle plants. Good Luck #320 (Above)!



☆ Reminiscing with the Volunteer Staff continued....



Thanks to a volunteer assembly line the shade tents are covered and the plants are inside and ready to green up for spring.



The stream monitoring team should be in good shape with 4 new trained monitors, including Lynn Dempsey and Brian Musker. Welcome Aboard!



The stream monitor team of 12 volunteers, including Walter Krzak (above, left) and John Field set out for their second year of collecting water quality data.

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